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SPRING 2015

UPDATE

An inside look at your Cedarville investment




Residence
LIFE



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DISCIPLESHIP AT YOUR DOORSTEP

By Jon Wood, Vice President for
Student Life and Christian Ministries

As I have opportunity to speak with alumni, one thing becomes abundantly clear. One of the strengths for Cedarville University throughout the decades has been the community and life transformation students experience through living in the residence halls on campus. Residence Life continues to transform students' lives today.

What makes Residence Life so important at Cedarville? I think we may glean an idea from the late professor and author Howard

to have been Joshua drawing on the life of Moses, Elisha watching and learning from Elijah, Timothy being impacted by Paul, or of course, one of the disciples walking with the Lord Jesus himself. In each of these examples, the pupil had opportunity to not only receive teaching, but to draw insight from walking alongside his leader. This pattern of reproducing discipleship is exactly what believers are called to today, so it is what we seek to provide through Residence Life. How do we do this?

BY DESIGN, RESIDENCE LIFE IS ABOUT EQUIPPING STAFF AND STUDENTS TO BE DEEPLY COMMITTED TO ONE WORD — DISCIPLESHIP.

Hendricks, who is often noted for having taught, "You can impress from a distance, but you can only impact up close." By design, Residence Life is about equipping staff and students to be deeply committed to one word — discipleship. Serving and encouraging students to grow in maturity in Christ and become disciple-makers who impact others up close — where they live — is the heartbeat of Residence Life.

Scripture is filled with examples of life-on-life discipleship. Imagine the opportunity

SERVANT-ORIENTED DISCIPLESHIP

The Residence Life staff includes the Student Life Deans, Resident Directors (RDs), and Resident Assistants (RAs). This team of individuals is present in the moments of life when it matters most to influence another person. Every week I watch our staff work out the servant-oriented discipleship principles below as they sacrificially serve others in the common moments of life:



John Filcik '15 is an international studies major from Holland, Michigan. He is an RA in Lawlor Hall.

Every year my experience in the residence hall has looked different — going in blind with a roommate freshman year who wound up becoming a good friend, pranking friends in the hall, and staying up to the wee hours of the morning talking with the guys. But my most rewarding experience has been being an RA my senior year.

My units consist of 20 freshmen and 12 non-freshmen. This has been a fantastic dynamic. In the residence halls at

Cedarville, there is an expectation that upperclassmen will pay it forward. Because the upperclassmen can remember older guys building into their lives when they were freshmen, they want to do the same. It makes the job of being an RA easier when you have a team of solid upperclassmen guys pursuing Christ and encouraging the younger guys to do the same.

We have had a ton of fun this year — from the awkward get-to-know-you conversations freshmen have at the beginning of the year, to dressing up as dominoes for the annual Lawlorpalooza event, to turning our unit into a psych ward for "Christmas Open Dorms."

This spring semester the guys in my unit have taken turns at our weekly meetings sharing their lifemaps, telling the other guys about their lives and how God has

worked in them up to this point. It's allowed the rest of us to better understand what makes them tick and how to encourage them. It unites us as a community and brings glory to our God for how He has redeemed each life.

Cedarville Residence Life has meant the world to me, partly because of the organized, fun events that the staff puts on, but mostly because of the quality guys I have had the privilege to know and befriend. When I graduate from this place, those late-night conversations will be sorely missed but always remembered. I'm thankful for the friends in the residence hall who have encouraged me, the friends who have allowed me to encourage them, and even the friends who so lovingly wrapped everything in my room in Saran Wrap one night.

RESIDENCE LIFE

- People do not care how much you know until they know how much you care.
- A disciple will not exceed his teacher, so you cannot invest what you do not possess.
- You can teach what you know, but you reproduce who you are.
- You never graduate from the school of discipleship.

These ideas are the very approach we are taking toward modeling Christlikeness and encouraging every man and woman who lives on campus toward maturity.

INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Life transformation is not a human work but is a work of the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, the design God has given for spiritual growth is for His disciples to intentionally invest in the lives of others. This happens through the structure of the Residence Life staff thinking strategically about how to invest in the lives of our students. There are many needs college students have today, and our staff is meeting those needs head on. Just a few examples include leading group studies on identity in Christ, spiritual leadership, forgiving others, and gaining freedom from pornography through studying *Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace*. In addition to these groups that provide opportunity for broad impact, each individual on the Residence Life team looks for opportunities to pursue a deeper level of discipleship with a few students who desire to grow more deeply. I have witnessed these informal, yet intentional and powerful, relationships be

a key factor in young men and women growing in all aspects of following Christ.

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN DISCIPLESHIP

A wonderful strength of Cedarville University is the close community on campus. The strength of the campus community in the big picture rests on the strength of individual communities in each residence hall. Yet, we all know strong community does not happen by accident. Each RD leads his or her team of RAs to facilitate events, programs, and spontaneous moments of community that draw students together into friendship. Just as important, in the spontaneous moments of life our staff is near to share in those times with students. Whether it is support in difficult moments, guiding individuals through relationships with other people, or sharing in the joyous moments of life, I am thankful for the excellent team that is present. Finally, I would fail you if I do not remind you of how important students doing ministry together is to the Cedarville experience. The community that is built in the residence halls is a catalyst for students taking the message of the Gospel and the love of Christ to the communities around the campus.

It is safe to say that the experience students have through living in residence halls is a significant element of their Cedarville experience. It is a tremendous privilege to be entrusted with the lives of students who live on campus, and I am impressed every day by the excellence with which the Residence Life staff invests in others. Please join me in continuing to pray for the Cedarville Residence Life staff and our students.



**Jon Wood, Vice President for
Student Life and Christian Ministries**



Abigail Hile '17 is an applied communication major. Her family currently lives in Springfield, Ohio, but she was born and raised in South Africa. She's been an RA in Printy Hall for one year.

Living in the residence halls is one of my favorite parts of not just being a college student, but being a Cedarville student. It's a tangible way to build Christlike community with the people around you. From late-night, heart-to-heart conversations, to getting ready for Printy Wars and daily life in the bathroom, every day is an opportunity to form relationships.

I am so thankful for the many friendships that I have made by living in the residence hall. I met my best friend freshman year because she lived across the hall from me. A lot of my close friendships today are a result of Printy/Lawlor Bro-Sis activities freshman year.

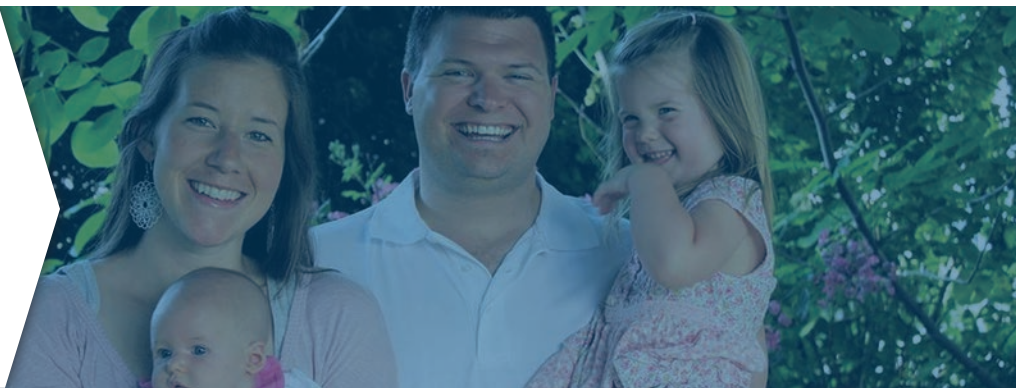
Being an RA has been one of the most humbling and challenging — yet most rewarding — experiences of my life. It has been a great joy to watch the girls in my units grow in their knowledge and love for the Lord as a result of being at Cedarville. It has challenged me to walk closer to the Lord than ever before.

The academics at Cedarville are great, and ultimately you walk out of here with a degree in your hand allowing you to get a great job. But it's the friends that live with you in the residence halls and the friends that you make because of Student Life programs that will have the greatest impact on your life. They are the ones that you "go home" to every night: the ones that you cry with over a break-up, the ones that laugh with you about embarrassing stories, and the ones who stand with you as you graduate. A lot of times they are even the ones standing beside you on your wedding day.

I firmly believe that I would not be the person that I am today without the friendships that I have made at Cedarville University as a result of Residence Life and Student Life.

THE ALUMNI PERSPECTIVE

By Justin Dodson '08



In my time at Cedarville, I experienced Residence Life at multiple levels, and I became familiar with its structure as a learning context within a learning context. This is appealing to the ears of parents, administration, and donors, but not always to students. The structure is impactful yet subtle, as not everyone walks away from Cedarville thinking that Residence Life has had a big impact on them.

Even those who have don't always recognize why. Life in the residence hall is a jump to reality after the hours spent theorizing and practicing in the classroom. It makes you live your beliefs, not just check box "C" in hopes that the odds land in your favor. It makes you think about friendship in con-

flict, about virtue in an ethically starved society, and about a Church that exists for the world.

I value academic rigor as much as the next person, but Cedarville's academics aren't the only thing that equipped me to train pastors in Africa today. It's not just the bachelor's degree, but the three years as a Resident Assistant, figuring out how to hold and call others up to an agreed version of what it means to live like Jesus in community. My master's degree helped me later as a Resident Director, walking students through the realities of life. It was the process of going through it with them, not the degree, that qualifies me to be doing what I do today.

It wasn't that I "aced" the Residence Life experiment. More often than not, I failed, and I grew and was stretched as a result. There is no perfect structure for pumping Christians out into the world, but I'm thankful to have experienced this one. It has shaped me for the context I face today.

Justin Dodson '08 graduated from Cedarville with a Bible presemenary degree and served as an RD at Cedarville while completing his master's degree. He and his family currently live in France and are preparing to move to Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa, where Justin will teach at Bethel Bible Institute.



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